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ABSTRACT

This document presents a general overview of The Community College Program for Elderly Texans, a program funded through state-allocated federal funds and local contributions, and available to the elderly at no cost. The program embodies a wide variety of activities, such as classroom studies, informational lectures, transportation, counseling, and group meetings, which are intended to overcome or ameliorate the social isolation of the elderly. The majority of programs at each of the 16 participating community colleges fit into those activities classified as recreational, social, or cultural, with the most popular being those involving arts and crafts. In all areas, however, interest and enthusiasm of participants are high. Several of the Texas community colleges make counseling services available to the elderly while all of the participating institutions provide some form of transportation services. In addition to serving the needs of the elderly, it is noted that the various programs have heightened the awareness of the public with regard to the activities available for the elderly. While the program was initially established as a demonstration, it has become a permanent program at many of the colleges. A brief bibliography, a statistical portrait of the elderly in Texas, and a list of participating colleges is appended. (JDS)

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An Overview of the Community College Programs for Elderly Texans

George H. Rappole

Community Service Report No. 6
University Center for Community Services
School of Community Service

North Texas State University
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Foreword

The community college is well suited to offer a wide variety of programs specifically designed for the aging. In Texas, recently adopted programs have attempted to initiate a more effective educational delivery system for the aging. Community and junior colleges were selected in order to provide special programs tailored to the needs of various groups within the community. In each college service area, older citizens were asked to form advisory councils in order to more adequately determine local needs, desired program procedures, and goals. In short, each college has developed a different program designed to meet the needs of the aging in its service area.

The Texas Governor's Committee on Aging advocates the use of all community colleges for developing community-based programs for the aging. Such programs have produced widespread appeal for both the aging and the participating colleges. This point is evidenced by the fact that a majority of institutions have developed local funding sources for the continuance of their programs. The primary purpose of this work, therefore, is to share with interested Texas colleges and universities, as well as with those institutions in other states, information needed to implement and maintain similar programs.

The Governor's Committee on Aging is pleased to have taken part in "The Community College Program for Elderly Texans" and commends the Coordinating Board, Texas College and University System, and its staff for the administration of this program. Special thanks also must be given to North Texas State University for the production of this publication.

Vernon McDaniel
Executive Director
Governor's Committee on Aging
State of Texas
Austin

Foreword

Simone de Beauvoir has noted that none of us feels we are old until one day we see ourselves as old through the eyes of others. Before we are old we hope we are fortunate enough to become old. It is important for society to make it possible for those who do finally recognize themselves as being old to feel fortunate that they are.

Older citizens should feel fortunate to have attained their advanced years, but that depends in large part on continuing participation in society, being involved, keeping alive that priceless asset of childhood, curiosity. And all these are dependent on continued growth.

The Coordinating Board and its staff have been pleased to be involved with the Texas community colleges in this project to offer educational opportunities for elderly Texans.

The success of the project is a tribute to cooperative efforts which merged federal, state, and local resources to achieve a common goal. Federal funding was available through Title III of the Older Americans Act. The Governor's Committee on Aging contracted with the Coordinating Board to administer the program. The Board allocated funds in 1974-75 to community colleges which could provide matching funds and develop projects to improve the quality of life for Texas senior citizens. With program development assistance from the Center for Studies in Aging of North Texas State University, 16 Texas community junior colleges developed and conducted projects. The diverse and innovative programs shared the common purpose of improving the physical and mental health and the economic well-being of elderly citizens.

Although federal funding was available for only one year, the senior citizens and the community colleges have been so enthusiastic about the programs that more than 80 percent of the institutions have announced plans to continue them.

The Coordinating Board and its staff express appreciation to the Governor's Committee on Aging, to the Center for Studies in Aging at North Texas State University, and to the participating community/junior colleges for their important contributions in utilizing their educational resources to enrich the lives of an important segment of the citizens of the State of Texas.

Kenneth H. Ashworth
Commissioner, Higher Education
Texas College and University System
State of Texas
Austin

Preface

The community college holds a position in the hierarchy of higher education made distinctive, as its name implies, by the localized approach these colleges take to the needs and demands of their constituents. Those colleges are less bound by tradition than the four year colleges and universities, and can respond promptly with programs which meet the many and ever changing needs of a community, be it a large metropolitan area, or a semirural county. If a newly established industry needs specialized machine operators, the community college is able to mobilize qualified staff and suitable facilities to train prospective employees. If a series of seminars is needed to acquaint high school football coaches with new rules changes, the college can undertake this assignment with little delay.

In this same spirit of responsiveness to the needs of the community, the community colleges have sought ways in which they can serve the steadily increasing numbers of older residents in their regions. The active presence of our senior citizens is becoming a recognized fact. We are experiencing today the first crest of a wave of active older community members. The demand for educational programs directed toward older adults is substantial now and will surely increase as the numbers of persons over sixty-five years of age grows from its present 10 percent to 13-14 percent by the year 2000.

In mid-1974 the community colleges in Texas were enabled by a special grant to test ideas for programs designed for residents sixty years of age or older living in their service districts. This report reviews origins of the special grant, The Community College Program for Elderly Texans, and the ways in which it was used, as well as the accomplishments of this program. The intent of this report is to make plain procedures community college educators found workable and those they did not. The purpose is not and cannot be an empirical evaluation. However, guidelines should become evident which may be of use to other colleges in the state and in other states which are interested in establishing comparable programs for older citizens. The report is an effort to analyze to whom these colleges directed their programs and to help other colleges determine how they can effectively serve their areas' older citizens with similar programs.

I. The Program and Its Origins

The older adult faces a number of barriers in becoming a participant in a conventional educational program. Some obstacles are rooted in the mythology of aging and the stereotypes which form the attitudes of large numbers of Americans. Although gerontological research has undercut these views, many persons continue to regard education of older adults with skepticism and even ridicule. Studies by educational gerontologists have demonstrated, however, the effectiveness of older persons as learners, as valued participants in multigeneration classroom discussions, and as curious, inquiring individuals. The values of greater self esteem, of increased feelings of personal worth, and of renewed social participation are some of the gains achieved by older students as recorded in current research studies. Magazines such as *Time* and *The Saturday Review* have had special feature articles on the growing number of programs in the new field of education for older adults. Several book-length studies have appeared in the past year noting the success experienced by the older adult in various programs.

Some skeptics have become supporters, but it is clear that this kind of program is a long way from becoming an established community resource. Future development of these programs depends not only on the demand for this kind of activity from older adults, but also on the availability of resources such as physical facilities, financing, and staff.

Program procedures and operating policies are an important area in planning educational activities for older adults. Each college in The Community College Program for Elderly Texans was challenged by the problem of transporting older students to locations where the programs were offered. In metropolitan areas where public transport is available, the problem is surmountable but presents scheduling conflicts. In suburban or rural areas, car pools, college buses, church buses, and volunteer drivers proved to be a feasible solution.

Another concern is scheduling convenient classes and meetings. Most colleges have been able to schedule afternoon sessions, often when the regular class schedule is light, sometimes once but more often twice a week. Seminars and meetings then are able to meet for one-and-one half-hour sessions with time available for general sessions of all participants and an afternoon break for refreshments.

Another area of concern is the cost to participants. Many older adults live on limited or fixed incomes with very little left over for outside activities. The Community College Program for Elderly Texans was wholly funded by the Governor's Committee on Aging, State of Texas, making this program free to all participants. Some incidental costs were met by voluntary donations in some colleges, from participants and community groups, but the main program was made available without charge.

A minor issue vexing to older persons is the standard routine of application and registration. The mystery or tedium of registration paper work can be avoided with careful planning.

This series of problems is an overview of concerns faced by the older student and of those foreseen by educators planning suitable programs. These issues will be discussed later, with attention to specific problems which arose in The Community College Program for Elderly Texans, and how the colleges met and solved many of them.

It is appropriate that some consideration be given to the kind of education desired by older students, from a philosophical as well as a practical point of view. Programs designed for the older student are referred to as "lifetime learning" by some educators. Other educators have developed a slightly different term, "lifelong education." The proponents of the latter argue that "learning" is too specific; it implies study for a definite body of information, such as theorems of geometry or Spanish grammar. The term "education" is preferred with its broad implications allowing for a wide range of program activities. "Lifelong education" has been the guiding concept for the program in Texas.

It is important to note that programs for the older student have been offered in a few locations throughout the state. Two community colleges have given programs for older adults with funds obtained under provisions of the Higher Education Act of 1965. Efforts by the two community colleges showed that interest in programs for older students did exist. It was evident that if a community college could attract older students to its campus, a group of responsive participants could be brought into the classroom. Successful programs in other states

served as models. Organizations such as the Institute of Lifetime Learning of the National Retired Teachers Association (NRTA) and the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), and the Extension Services of the U.S. Department of Agriculture developed programs with noteworthy results.

Another attractive factor for community colleges considering The Community College Program for Elderly Texans was the opportunity to serve an age group not often seen on campus. Occasionally a person sixty years of age or older enrolls in classes of both credit and non-credit type, but this age student would be an exception. From informal surveys it was evident that non-credit programs of less than term length would be desirable and would attract a larger number of participants. Class meetings should be informal and free of examinations, lectures and the use of textbooks. An instructor should be skilled in the processes of group dynamics and favor discussion methods in class meetings. Audio-visual materials should be available but their use should be tailored to the needs of an older person. Since the community colleges have developed and pioneered a number of innovative teaching methods and procedures for nontraditional students, it was reasonable to expect that they would be able to meet the needs of the older student.

As to content of an educational program for older adults, no investigator had designated until recently subjects needed or desired by prospective students. A nationwide survey indicated areas of interest as perceived by several different types of educational organizations.[1] Responses varied according to type of group queried. Groups engaged in formal education (community colleges and universities) report a high interest in academic studies. Persons working in parks and recreation departments favor recreational programs. Those in cooperative extension work favor nutrition and consumer education. When data from all groups are consolidated, subjects given in present programs rank as follows:

Hobby & recreational	55%
Consumer education & nutrition	46%
Health related	34%
Aesthetic appreciation	33%
Other home & family life	30%
Personal development	23%
Basic education: reading, math, citizenship	21%
Academic courses: high school, college	20%

Other subject areas mentioned by respondents are community and world affairs, jobs and skills, and religion and spiritual development.

Organizations also were asked what new subject areas or additional "courses" are needed. Rankings change somewhat though the first three of those in the present programs are still at the head of the list. Consumer education is first, followed by health related subjects and then hobby and recreational subjects.

Subjects or courses being ranked are designed for non-credit programs. A few individuals have become interested in credit and degree programs as a result of their experiences in an informal, non-credit offering. Many colleges in the country have reported older adults who have enrolled in Adult Basic Education programs, high school equivalency, and college level entrance programs. Older students also have earned certification in special fields such as secretarial or mechanical skills, health care including long term care, and other second and third career occupations.

As a corollary of this concern with non-credit programs, many colleges have assigned administration of these special efforts to reach older students to a community service director rather than to one of the academic deans. The program and its clients are outside the academic mission and are more a part of the community college's extramural role.

Program planners and teaching personnel need to keep in mind the wide range of educational background of the older citizen in today's society. The median or norm of years of formal schooling is eight for those over sixty-five at the time of the 1970 census. As one looks at each of the younger groups, by decades, the number of years in schooling steadily

[1] Roger DeCrow, *New Learning for Older Americans: An Overview of National Effort* (Washington, D.C., 1975).

increases. By the end of the twentieth century, the median years will be twelve for those over sixty-five, and very possibly fourteen years, with only a very small percentage having less than eight years of school. The person whose last experience with the classroom was before 1918 is not likely to be attracted to academic studies. Educational differences will vary from community to community, from affluent suburbs to rural countryside, but for the present community colleges will be responding to interests in the three areas of hobby and recreational, consumer education and nutrition, and health-related subjects.

Planners also must be concerned with availability of space and teaching facilities. In some communities outside Texas, the pressure of a rapidly growing school-age population has declined. Many school systems across the country have, for the first time in years, partly used and even unused classrooms and school buildings. The space situation is not yet true in Texas nor has the effect of declining school-age population been felt by the state's community colleges. In fact, many community colleges are operating sixteen hours a day to meet demands of their service areas. There are times in the week, even with busy college schedules, when facilities do become available. In addition, off-campus sites have proved to be more desirable for older residents since this minimizes the problem of bringing older persons to a college campus.

In June 1974, the Governor's Committee on Aging announced it would make available funds for an educational/service delivery program for the older citizens of Texas. Discussions led to approval of an inter-agency agreement between the Governor's Committee on Aging and the Coordinating Board, Texas College and University System. The agreement delegated administration of the program to the Coordinating Board.

The first step taken by the Board was to initiate the sending of a memorandum dated July 18, 1974, from the Office of Community Service to the presidents of forty-seven community college districts in the state, comprising fifty-two separate colleges. The memorandum asked the colleges "to propose innovative or demonstration programs designed to improve the quality of life of elderly Texans." The message encouraged ideas for an "educational program to improve the physical and mental health of this group and their economic well being; to offer consultative, counseling, or advisory services; or newsletters."

In order to meet state fiscal planning requirements, the community colleges were asked to submit proposals by a specific deadline. Twenty-three proposals were received, a good response in view of limited time available to program directors for preparation.

The Coordinating Board appointed an Advisory Council made up of persons actively involved in adult education, senior citizen groups, and community programs to review proposals. The Council was directed to prepare a priority list of programs for final approval by the Commissioner of Higher Education. At the same time the Council was asked to recuire a minimum funding level for each program with 70 percent financing attributable to the state grant and 30 percent from local sources. By late August 1974, the Council had deliberated and chosen sixteen proposals for funding. In making individual allocations, the Council was instructed to hold each program to "an austere funding level . . . which would enable an energetic, resourceful, and dedicated project director to conduct a meaningful program."

The original grant available from the Governor's Committee was $245,619. Later in the academic year, additional funds were provided by the Committee, bringing the total amount disbursed to $304,669. Moreover, each local project was able to increase its support from the original 30 percent matching level to 40 percent.

Besides financial support from state and local sources, support was gained from participants in the program at each of the colleges. Modest fees were paid for materials used in arts and crafts courses, for excursions to off-campus events, and for identification cards granting the holder free entry to campus events, use of the college library, and use of physical education facilities.

In preparing proposals for the Coordinating Board, each college was asked to indicate the number of older adults they expected to reach through their program. The range was from a few hundred at the smaller schools to several thousand at the larger ones. Original estimates anticipated there would be about 25,000 older Texans directly involved. The estimate was low. The actual number was over 30,000, exclusive of the number who attended single events or received special newsletters of program activities. The total is in excess of eight percent of the older population in the service areas of each college, a commendable turnout for the first year of operation.

II. Program Designs and Expectations

In the original grant request for participation in The Community College Program for Elderly Texans, each college proposed a variety of activities. In selecting emphasis, each program director had to determine the needs of his region's elderly. An advisory group of older members of the community also offered opinions. The programs which emerged from this planning process reflect participation of individuals and community groups who made up the older student audience. The next step for the program planner was to choose activities desired by older residents, but which could be accomplished by full time or part-time available staff, salaried or volunteer. Other considerations in choosing types of activities were physical facilities and availability of facilities.

The original proposals constitute a volume nearly three inches thick, but it is possible to identify common concerns in a summary rather than a repetition of this material. These areas are as follows:

1. classroom studies—a wide selection, from the fine arts to language skills, from nearly every academic department,
2. informational lectures—topics from Social Security and employment to nutrition and consumer education,
3. transportation provision—a range from volunteer drivers to using college and church buses for on-campus programs,
4. coordination—a wholehearted collaboration with other community groups serving the elderly,
5. publicity—presenting program activities through all forms of media including newsletters specifically prepared for program participants,
6. planning—establishing advisory committees representing older residents for current and future activities,
7. accessibility—taking programs off-campus to other locations in the community , and opening campus functions and facilities to those enrolled in the program,
8. vouunteers—securing volunteers as workers and instructors in the program,
9. counseling—providing staff members and retired professionals for individuals and group meetings in fields such as personal finances, housing, and medical care, and
10. recreation—developing social activities from appropriate sports to dances and games.

Each program proposal expresses an intent to overcome or ameliorate social isolation of the elderly through activities.

In comparing programs with those reported in a recent nationwide study made by the American Association of Junior and Community Colleges, one notices parallel concerns and interests. Andrew Korim, author of the report, clusters programs in the following groups:

1. basic needs-oriented personal services, such as nutrition, transportation, health, and employment,
2. counseling and guidance services for individuals and groups,
3. information and referral functions such as current facts on community resources made available to the elderly,
4. education and training opportunities, making older individuals aware of appropriate continuing education programs from basic education to specialized offerings,
5. preretirement and postretirement services, in groups and individual programs,
6. recreational, social, and cultural activities,
7. facilitative activities, or providing meeting places, preparing and distributing newsletters, and utilizing news media.

III. Program Results

Each location in The Community College Program for Elderly Texans developed its program around interests of its own area's elderly. Grants were made to a variety of colleges. There are those in the state's large metropolitan areas such as Dallas, Houston, and Ft. Worth. Medium to large cities are represented by Amarillo, Galveston, El Paso, Waco, and Midland. Small cities in more rural settings are Beeville, Denison-Sherman, Paris, Ranger, Snyder, Laredo, and Wharton. It is important that each program is considered in its own setting. No central program would meet the purposes in such a wide variety of locations.

Some communities have had a number of services provided for the elderly, and others relatively few. All have had basic services and programs provided through various federal laws and regulations. There is, though, considerable variation. In metropolitan areas, colleges introduced programs into an existing complex of activities. In other areas, programs were unique. What specific offerings did emerge from the planning and implementation of these plans?

The intent to offer classes for educational and cultural enrichment dominates the original proposals. Only two colleges proposed other activities. The academic intention was realized in small ways; perhaps the planners who had no notion of presenting any kind of academic activity were better attuned to their prospective clientele. Formal classroom studies do not disappear but are transformed from a major to a minor role. Major program developments are activities which are recreational, social, and cultural.

Activities reflect interests of the older population in participating communities. In many places some older students became auditors or even enrolled as students in regular academic courses.

Subjects which appear in reports of the community colleges make a substantial list. Subjects include western civilization, political parties and programs, United States history, United States government, history of the Southwest, studies in Black history, American literature, Spanish literature, creative writing, English composition and rhetoric, Spanish and English as second languages, general science, general geography, rocks and minerals, reading improvement, elementary piano, psychology of personal adjustment, dream psychology, and the psychology of aging. From reports of enrollment, the traditional classroom offering on each campus attracted from as few as eight or ten to as many as thirty or forty. In comparison with other activities, academic fields drew small numbers. It is misleading, however, to make any conclusions. Degree of interest and enthusiasm for academic programs on each campus was high. As noted, academic class offerings were only part of the schedule. All colleges provided a schedule which would permit each participant a choice of other activities.

As indicated, the majority of programs on each campus fits into those activities which are recreational, social, and cultural in nature. The most popular area would appear to be activities involving arts and crafts. Amarillo College offered the greatest number of classes in arts and crafts with such activities as oil painting, needlecrafts, woodworking, pottery, and lapidary classes. Programming was a result of a close collaboration between Amarillo College and the Amarillo Senior Citizens Association, which occupies space in a former high school leased to it by the college. In the year being considered, 1974-1975, 1,778 older people were involved in activities at Amarillo College.

The Dallas County Community College District through its participating colleges, Richland, Eastfield, and El Centro, offered a cluster of courses in painting, jewelry making, sketching, design, and needlecrafts. Several of the colleges, notably in El Paso, Laredo, and Beeville, reflected the Spanish heritage of their constituents through use of cultural folk crafts. McLennan Community College, Waco, shows nearly a third of its group of older residents active in arts and crafts, with offerings in decoupage, oil painting, needlecrafts, and ceramics. Wharton County added to this array of workshops with photography. The Tarrant County Junior College system is also prominent in its offerings in arts and crafts work. A number of participating older adults in the Tarrant County Program placed their work on sale in Ft. Worth's annual Senior Citizens' Art & Craft show. Although this kind of exhibit and sale is not an intentional part of The Community College Program for Elderly Texans, it has proved to be one of the visible and rewarding sides of the program. The older artist or craftworker has been able to renew an interest or a hobby, or to discover a latent talent first for personal satisfaction

and pleasure and second as an often unanticipated and welcome source of real income, a kind of recognition of personal worth.

The category of activities which are described as basic needs-oriented personal services are prominent in all programs. It is perhaps an arbitrary decision to place personal services outside academic classroom proceedings since content is heavily oriented towards information and is often presented in classroom situations. Personal services programs are presented to participants in group meetings, with a series of topics being presented over the span of the fall or spring short term. Topics covered were Social Security Administration rules and regulations, physical fitness and diet, nutrition information for the older person, tax regulations affecting the older person, the older consumer, legal problems including wills, estate planning and contracts, medical and health problems, and Medicare/Medicaid.

Another popular offering in the personal needs category is defensive driving. More than half of the participants in each college's program enrolled in the driving course. Defensive driving is encouraged by law enforcement officials and by some auto insurance companies.

The other popular topic in the personal needs group is home maintenance or, in the cities, household maintenance for apartments. If gardening, house plants, food freezing, and canning are considered part of home maintenance, a majority of participants in all programs chose to enroll. In rural areas, and even in suburban settings, the popularity of home maintenance courses is understandable. Ways and means to cut down food costs is offered to an audience particularly sensitive to the cost of living.

The development of counseling and guidance services for individuals and groups is a complex undertaking, one that only several colleges in The Community College Program for Elderly Texans were able to organize. Directed and formal counseling occurred in four colleges: Paris Junior College; McLennan Community College, Waco; Midland College; and Tarrant County Junior College, Ft. Worth. In these programs it appeared as preretirement counseling, an offering that has particular appeal to those who have passed their sixtieth birthday and anticipate leaving full time employment within a five year period. Approaches to counseling reflect a wide variation regarding function of time and available personnel. Format varied from five or six lectures to sixteen two-hour sessions dealing with wills and estates, finances, health and medical services, part-time employment, hobbies and recreation, travel, relocating one's residence, and life adjustment. A respected program which was developed in two notable instances at McLennan and Tarrant County community colleges dealt with retirement planning. Preparing for retirement has become widely recognized as a popular and needed subject and will become an integral part of the community college programs in the future.

Other types of counseling offered by community colleges ranged from family services to securing part-time employment. All colleges provided an information and referral service through the use of newsletters and bulletins.

The colleges adopted various procedures to provide their older clientele with transportation to classes and off-campus locations. In the Midland-Odessa area, with its widely spread clusters of elderly, a mini-van was provided and volunteer drivers used to serve locations where programs were offered. Based at Midland College, the programs served a seventeen county area, in eleven different towns, covering many hundreds of square miles and reaching over 1,000 older residents in the Permian Basin region. Both Odessa College and Howard College assisted Midland College in establishing the region-wide operation, a notable logistical achievement. Grayson County Community College in the Sherman-Denison area was able to use its own buses for bringing people to its campus, as well as church buses for groups located in other towns in the county.

Transportation needs were met in other ways, but by far the best solution appears to be the use of off-campus locations in areas where a high proportion of elderly are living. The program is brought to participants rather than the reverse. In Amarillo, where a senior citizen center was in operation, the local community college was able to offer its program for the center's membership of over 7,000 older residents. A large number of participants used their own cars for attending center activities, with a mini-van service providing passenger pick ups at designated locations and times. Attendance data indicate success. Some 800 of the senior citizen group took part in college class offerings. In the year following with the support of the program, nearly 1,800 individuals were enrolled in classes. Many enrolled in several classes for a total of nearly 3,000 separate registrations during the 1974-75 academic year.

One of the newer community colleges, North Harris, located near Houston, has no consolidated campus complex. Accordingly, six different locations were used for program classes, three high schools, two churches, and one community center. Again, many problems involving transportation were solved by locating activities in sites near participants' residences. In nearby Baytown, Lee College was able to conduct all of its classes on campus. The one exception was a series of lectures and activities on nutrition funded under Title VII of the Older Americans Act. Lee College's program included a number of bus trips with participants paying the cost of bus charter for visits to various activities in the southeast region of the state.

Eastfield College, one of the colleges in the Dallas Community College District, took its program to mid-day nutrition sites in East Dallas, as well as offering some classes on campus. The pattern was followed by Richland College, utilizing several public schools in the area. In addition, a retirement apartment complex, Treemont, proved to be a well attended site, drawing not only on residents, but also on residents from nearby homes and apartments. Of interest is that younger age groups were invited to attend classes at Treemont. About half the enrollment were under sixty years of age. The other participating college in the Dallas area was El Centro, located in the downtown area and accessible to the city's public transportation service. El Centro participants attended classes on Saturdays to facilitate use of the building, and came from communities lying to the west of Dallas, such as Oak Cliff. Solutions of transportation needs of the elderly made it possible for the Dallas district to serve nearly 3,100 residents in 117 classes.

Transportation is an important consideration in the success of a community college program. Any permanent or long-range program must have proper and adequate arrangements for transportation.

A number of courses were made available to older citizens which offered specific training in new skills or the renewal of long unused skills. Auto mechanics, woodworking, and typewriting are subjects which occur frequently in various colleges. Many participants became directly acquainted with regular offerings of community colleges and realized that many of these offerings were of direct use to them and within their capabilities. Typical of this kind of person was a retired school custodian who was persuaded to take a regular campus course in small engine repair. After completing the one-year program, he opened an engine repair business. Enrollment in specific skill programs does require payment of fees and standard registration procedures and is not actually part of the Community College Program for Elderly Texans. Depending on the local situation, some fees are reduced for non-credit courses. Auditing any class is free to persons sixty years of age or older if space is available.

The benefit of participating in the Community College Program is that the older student becomes acquainted with other programs being offered in the local community college and discovers opportunities which are open to him. It still is relatively unusual for a person sixty or older to begin a degree program. However, through such programs as CLEP (College Level Entrance Program), a number of older people are finding that they have had formal and informal learning experiences which qualify them for credit programs leading to a degree.

The area of preretirement is one in which the community colleges can provide a valuable resource. Such a program need not be a campus based operation, and in fact, is one which is readily portable for presentation in business and industrial organizations. McLennan County Community College (Waco) and the Tarrant County Junior Colleges (Ft. Worth) have had some success in reaching groups with this kind of instruction in off-campus settings.

The next classification is of universal interest and of myriad varieties: recreational, social, and cultural. Every college in the program offered activities in this area. The value is beyond question for a group whose leisure time is nearly all of their waking hours. This part of the program makes it possible for the older person to remain an active part of his community and to continue his involvement in community affairs, and for many, to become involved for the first time in the life of the community.

The experience of the directors of the arts and craft program at Amarillo College which involved over 1,400 different people in cultural and social activity is pertinent. In reporting on this phase of the program to the college administration they wrote:

> Our teachers find that their (the participants) sharing knowledge (with one another) no longer allows them to be lonely. Our students find new emotional outlets and dignity in learning; and that they have not lost the ability to progress. They find new friendships and

acquaintances with like interests. They find others adjusting to retirement, age, and health restrictions. They find many myths or brain washing regarding age not in accordance with reality. They have fun, laugh, and their problems recede to actual proportions. Many have lowered their blood pressure, gotten off tranquilizers, and become more alert as they respond to the stimuli of involvement. These people have had at least one career behind them. Their study habits and their teaching methods must be handled differently than a younger classroom group. . . . The difference seems to be that hobbies are done for sheer pleasure derived from doing them. . .and most persons so engaged are delighted to share their knowledge. . . . These people in classes react as one in a club and expect to be treated in this manner. Many older students are very strapped for money and even supplies are hard to come by. Every ounce of instruction and classroom contact is vital to them. Some have had large incomes, yet outward appearances belie their inner needs. The friendships they make here and the teachers we have been able to attract have begun to make this area very important in their daily living. As long as dexterity of hands remains and communication can be exchanged, crafts may become a vital tie with emotional well-being and friendships. And some are finding great hidden talents—this is, of course, the icing on the cake.

In each of the programs offered by the sixteen colleges in The Community College Program, crafts and art classes are prominent. Doll making and clothing, ceramics (pottery, decoration, and design), leathercraft, macrame, crocheting, embroidery, crewel, knitting, needlecraft, lapidary and mineral crafts, sand casting, quilting, decoupage, candle making, bread dough art, and others are part of the long list of crafts, a list that is almost a complete index of any craft known to the people of the state. Oil and watercolor painting drew large numbers of participants, with many of the colleges having from five to ten classes running at one time.

It is interesting to note that this outpouring of craft and art activity did not wind up on a bedroom shelf or in a closet. Amarillo, Tarrant County, colleges in the Dallas and Houston districts, and all those with active arts and crafts programs either set up their own exhibits or arranged for the entry of these works in senior citizen fairs.

Music performing for many elderly remains a source of pleasure. Most community college programs offered an opportunity for instruction or participation in musical groups. Grayson County Community College made available piano classes, using the electrical keyboards of the campus music department. Richland College's classes in Treemont provided choral singing as did several other colleges. Eastfield College was able to organize a "kitchen band" which soon led to the creation of three more similar groups in the area. Now all groups are much in demand at various senior citizen centers in the Dallas area. For many whose musical abilities had been forced into dormancy during working years, an opportunity was available to resume practice and performance.

At each location throughout the state, many of these musical groups made possible social evenings or afternoons for participants of round and square dancing. Social affairs also benefitted from efforts of those who had taken classes in cooking—with gourmet dishes, special breads, and desserts prepared for these events.

Richland College was able to use facilities of its Physical Education Department for its group of older Texans who were involved with board games, table tennis, shuffleboard, bicylcing, exercise equipment, tennis, golf, archery, swimming, volleyball, and basketball. The Sunday afternoon recreational programs have drawn a regular and steady clientele, with transportation to the college furnished through the YWCA using volunteer drivers. Other colleges set aside times each week for those who wished to use the college's physical education facilities. Swimming, golf, and shuffleboard have proved to be quite popular. For the less active, cards and dominoes were made available. Bridge classes were another popular offering in most of the colleges, with several tournaments conducted during the year.

Bus trips to points and places of interest were arranged by many of the colleges, costs paid for by those participating. Many Texas historical sites were visited, as well as museums of all kinds. Trips also were made to special garden and horticultural exhibits, while a few groups attended plays, sports, and musical events.

For cultural activities, three of the colleges turned to the special heritage of the Southwest, its Spanish element. Laredo Junior College, located in a region with high percentage of Spanish speaking residents, drew on its rich cultural background to develop two programs of special interest. The college staff organized a story telling seminar in order to

pas on the history and culture of Laredo to the youngsters of the community. Training seminars were given initially to participants with guidance provided in speech delivery and audio and video tape techniques. Participants, all sixty years of age or older, were persons who felt at ease relating stories to small groups of school children and other interested groups, such as residents of the senior citizen's home, and neighborhood centers throughout the city. The fifteen participants told stories drawn from Spanish folklore of the Southwest as well as favorite tales of their own experiences.

Another group was organized in an oral history seminar with assistance from members of the college's staff specialists. Involved in the seminars were individuals who could contribute information of past events in their lifetimes, but were not necessarily interested in making group presentations. Tapes resulting from these presentations have been made available to the Laredo Bicentennial Commission and the library of Laredo Junior college. Information represents the history and culture of Laredo, centering on recollections of the Mexican Revolution of 1912.

As the director of the program in Laredo said, "The largely untapped human resource of older citizens can be utilized by the community in many ways. Older individuals can better adjust to changing life circumstances and gain a greater sense of self worth by finding new outlets for their skills and interests."

El Paso Community College, serving an area similar to Laredo in its high percentage of Spanish speaking residents, attempted to involve as many as possible of the Spanish-surnamed group in its program. Activities were set up in four county nutrition centers and two senior citizen centers. The program director obtained the services of several bilingual teachers for these daytime programs. (More bilingual teachers would have been welcome, but some teachers were unable to set aside time from their daily work schedules.) Classes in government, citizenship, Spanish literature, and English as a second language were offered. Many of the participating group became acquainted with requirements for citizenship. El Paso Community College offered courses of interest to other members of the older community, such as arts and crafts, elementary Spanish, drawing, history of the southwest, adjustment to aging, and a popular series of illustrated lectures, "Arm Chair Travel."

Bee County Community College also set about reaching its Mexican-American population by appointing a Mexican-American as one of the project coordinators. About one third of the participants in the Bee County program were of Spanish origin. Both colleges were able to develop programs of interest to special population groups and, through this medium, bring direct services to groups that have been outside the reach of conventional college campus activities.

Many colleges in the program presented training and workshop activities for benefit of people in their communities. Workshops or training meetings were designed to inform the community not only of the college's own immediate program, but also to heighten the awareness of community leaders to needs of the elderly.

Amarillo College co-sponsored with RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program, part of the federal ACTION program) two-hour weekly meetings to inform volunteer workers of current issues.

Eastfield College and other colleges of the Dallas County Community College District presented several meetings in cooperation with other organizations. Working with the Council of Jewish Women and several senior citizen groups, the District's program directors formed a day-long conference on Safer Senior Years. The result was formation of task forces to work in community education with the Dallas Police Department, banks, and the news media to prevent crimes against the elderly. In cooperation with the Planned Parenthood Association, these colleges sponsored a conference dealing with sexuality and the aging process. Participating were counselors, psychologists, and educators. Bishop College, Dallas, joined with these community colleges to sponsor a conference, "The Voices of the Black Aged," which brought together the Black aged and local business and community leaders. Cadets in training for duty with the Dallas Police Department attended regular sessions in order to become acquainted with special concerns of the elderly. Eastfield College capped its program with a Senior Citizen Emphasis Week. Regular college students and staff were brought into panel discussions with personnel from community agencies serving the elderly. Also utilized were displays in the Learning Resource Center and bibliographies of special interest to the faculty. The success of the program indicates it will be a regular annual activity at Eastfield.

In the Permian Basin region, Midland and Odessa Colleges sponsored a two-day workshop directed at persons working with agencies serving the elderly, as well as the elderly themselves. Staff from the University of Texas of the Permian Basin, the National Retired Teachers Association, the American Association of Retired Persons, and Howard College, Big Spring, assisted in arranging and presenting the program. Later in the academic year another one-day seminar was hosted by the Regional Planning Commission, Midland Senior Services, and the area colleges with speakers coming from agencies elsewhere in the state. The focus of the meeting was on methods and procedures in programs serving the elderly.

North Harris County Community College sponsored a series of medical seminars in cooperation with Baylor College of Medicine's Community Medicine Department. Speakers on gerontology from TRIMS (Texas Research Institute of Mental Sciences) also participated in this series.

Paris Junior College sponsored two general conferences which focused on preretirement planning. A one-day meeting, Multi-Ethnic Conference on Aging, presented speakers from the Area Agency on Aging, Social Security and Welfare Departments, and Community Action Programs.

Tarrant County Junior College District organized a series of twenty-four meetings at different locations in Ft. Worth to study and update the 1961 White House Conference on Aging statement, "The Rights of the Aging." The final document was completed and submitted as the 1976 Older Americans Bi-Centennial Year Project. To assist faculty teaching classes for the elderly, the program staff presented a one-day workshop with special attention to the sensory processes of the elderly. Utilized was an empathic model developed by the Center for Studies in Aging at North Texas State University. Peer counselor training was initiated through a series of seminars covering such topics as physical fitness, finances, and insurance.

Laredo Junior College set up a series of training seminars for outreach workers, all older residents of the area, to familiarize them with services available to their peers such as those offered by the Department of Public Welfare, the local Housing Authority, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, the local Manpower Program, Social Security, and the South Texas Development Council. In connection with this program, one of the staff members adapted and translated into Spanish "An Information and Referral Training Manual." The college also sponsored three three-day workshops for those in the area interested in serving senior citizens. Topics covered in the training sessions were aging and its problems, interviewing and information giving, resource gathering and filing, outreach work, and aspects of institutionalization.

Through many meetings and conferences, The Community College Program for Elderly Texans served not only the elderly themselves, but many hundreds of community service providers for the elderly. Newspapers and radio stations in each area had numerous news articles and features, heightening the public's awareness of activities available to older people of the community.

Use of the news media by community colleges has been prolific and productive. One program director stated that no more media coverage was being sought since all classes and special seminars had filled to overflowing. Many colleges developed and distributed newsletters specifically tailored to needs of older community members they were serving. Newsletter format ranged from simple memeographed one or two page announcements to more extensive photo-offset four-page publications. The more sophisticated newsletters would provide in some detail a calendar of events of interest to older residents and an occasional feature article on such topics as changes in Social Security programs and nutrition for older persons.

The review of activities which each college presented in its Program for Elderly Texans is only a brief look at the top of each peak. The thousands of class hours, the countless telephone calls made by program directors and their staff members, the plans and preparations for classrooms, meeting places and trips—these need no detailed explanation and acknowledgement of them is more than a courtesy. Without this kind of work no program can succeed. The success of the program owes much to generous and dedicated staff support.

Constant reference has been made to participants in the program, but of equal importance is that the providers of these programs throughout the state also were being educated to the needs of the elderly. The program directors focused at first on education within its usual definition, but found that often the kind of knowledge and information wanted by participants fell within the information and referral function. Information and refferal are two words

commonly used in any discussion of services for the elderly. Though referring and informing covers a wide variety of activities, the basic process is one of helping people determine what they need and getting them to the agency or organization which can meet that need. To bring about this linkage, the college's program directors sought new relations with community service providers, bringing them to the campus and working with them to develop transportation services, medical services, counseling services, and employment services. Colleges also set up their own advisory councils, with a majority of its members sixty years of age or older, to provide a needed point of view for planning.

IV. Summary and Conclusions

Sixteen community colleges across Texas in The Community College Program for Elderly Texans have touched and perhaps changed the lives of many older people residing in their service areas. Imaginative presentation of academic courses in capsule form, of methods and procedures in arts and crafts, or needed social activities, plainly captivated many participants. Proof that interest once aroused does not vanish is to be found in the action of nearly half of the community colleges in continuing their programs with their own funds. Once having started a program to meet needs of older residents, colleges have found ways and means to make this offering a permanent part of their service to the community. Several other colleges, not part of the original Community College Program for Elderly Texans, have taken note of the success of their colleagues' presentations and moved ahead with comparable activities for their own communities. Even in communities which have not been able to continue their programs because of economic conditions, it is likely that demonstration of the kind of activities which can win active support of older citizens will not be forgotten.

What is the point of view from the participant or consumer regarding activities in The Community College Program for Elderly Texans? One constant feature which strikes a visitor to any of these programs is the enthusiasm and excitement expressed by older students. Classroom discussions are animated whether they are on the psychology of dreams, coping with Social Security, or learning about bee keeping. One group studying bees as part of an introduction to modern biology had a tangible sample of hot biscuits mixed and baked by the instructor's wife with honey from hives maintained by the instructor. Another group organized for a class in creative writing soon found a central interest, stories they had been telling at bedtime to their grandchildren. The final class report turned out to be an anthology of each class member's favorite tale, and at last report, was about to be published for general distribution. One lady, a matron of ninety years, commented during her program's graduation day that it was the first "diploma" she had ever received. Another said her grandchildren had asked, "Where are you going so dressed up today, Granny?" "To the college," she answered. "It is my graduation day!" "But you are pulling our leg," her grandchildren responded. She reported that they were very surprised when she returned home with her diploma and carnation.

Another development commented on by several directors was the change in people's looks and mode of dress from the beginning of the program in the autumn to its end in the spring. Perpetual frowns changed to a more pleasant demeanor. Rather nondescript clothing was left in the closet for styles that were more becoming to the wearer.

Efforts to bring many older people out of an isolated living environment is a major goal of current programs for older Americans. The Community College Program for Elderly Texans can mark up many successes in this category. One certain outcome agreed upon by the program directors is that a whole new group within the populations has been introduced to colleges and their programs, and for most of these people, social isolation is no longer a necessary condition of life, only a personal choice.

Another area of note is the newly-found relationship between young college students and older persons attending events and classes on campus. The older person who leads a group discussion in a class seminar is no longer seen by the young as one of an amorphous or mysterious group, but as a vital presence in our society, contributing information and attitudes that are still useful and valid. Several campuses used regular students as aides and guides in their programs and introduced a number of students in this way to volunteer work in community agencies serving the elderly. One tends to think of any program as moving in one direction, from giver to receiver, but this effort produced many benefits for the givers.

A teacher in one program for Spanish speaking elderly remarked that her older students in introductory government and citizenship were always attentive and cooperative, listening and questioning with direct interest and intent. The teacher's notion of methodology in education is very much to the point, not only with older people but young ones as well: "You teach people, not the subject . . . it's people first, the subject second." Many new practitioners in adult education ask about methodology and become very concerned about their approach to the older student. The teacher of Spanish speaking elderly appears to have captured the situation. Repeatedly, teachers and administrators involved in The Community College

Program say that each person must be treated as an individual and that individualized teaching methods and group discussion will yield the best results.

Another clear message from each of the programs is the necessity for older memebers of the community to be involved in planning and operation of activities. Either as members of an advisory council, or as participants, ideas from older citizens are vital for the success of the overall program. The involvement of the older population, along with support and assistance of organizations, private and governmental, are two of the key ingredients in a happy outcome. As part of the community service function new college relations have been established with organizations serving the elderly throughout the state. Leaders in the community and in neighborhoods also appear to have been stimulated to continue with activities initially introduced through The Community College Program. Advocacy for programs for older students has been experienced by various officials in government and in college administration. From evidence accumulated, advocates are dealing from a position of a proven program. Rationale for the community college's involvement with an older student program is evident and is brought out in several of the final reports submitted to the Coordinating Board, Texas College and University System.

Community colleges have accomplished and can continue to achieve notable results in their work with older people. The community college has no monopoly, nor should it have, on serving our older residents, but it has unique opportunities, as one director stated, for facilitating, coordinating, and catalyzing resources of the community. Another successful aspect of The Community College Program for Elderly Texans is that with the available money far more was accomplished than was expected. Fiscal soundness is largely due to cooperation secured from other groups and also in part to the work of older students in donating time and talent to improve physical facilities, building easels and storage frames for art classes, teaching classes, helping with registration procedures, and providing transportation to program sites. More classes and seminars than appeared to fit the initial budget did materialize through pooling of resources. Money from the Governor's Committee on Aging was stretched to reach as many elderly as possible. Though cost accounting procedures are beyond the scope of this report, it is evident that each dollar spent brought more than a dollar's worth of return and satisfaction for the 25,000 or so participants.

One can write "finis" to this report with a sense of having reviewed many real accomplishments, but at the same time, the end is really a beginning. A program has been demonstrated as workable, as needed, as a contribution to the well-being of our older neighbors. The demonstration has become a permanent program in many of the colleges and will grow to encompass more of the older population each year as the tastes and interests of each generation change. Goya's self portrait as an old long-bearded man, supporting himself on two walking sticks, carries the inscription "Aun aprendo (I am still learning)." As many older Texans have found in this past year, the chance of learning is never lost.

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VI. Appendices

A. The Older Population

It is useful in this report to review the statistical character of the older population of Texas, to better understand probable educational interests and needs. A brief look at the national census of 1970 will enable the reader to appreciate the viewpoint taken by the college administrator in designing a program to reach an older audience.

In 1970 Texas had 965,100 persons sixty-five years of age or older, or 8.8 percent of a total population of 11,196,730. In addition, there were 983,724 persons between fifty-five and sixty-five years of age. The population over fifty-five was 17.4 percent of the total. When the census estimates for 1976 are released, it is certain the population over fifty-five will have increased by several percentage points. In counties served by The Community College Program for Elderly Texans in 1970, there were 362,629 people over sixty-five, or 37.6 percent of the state's older population. Usually the older group is not considered part of a school district, but it is an audience which will become increasingly important to community colleges in the years ahead.

The Manpower Report of the President, released in April, 1975 brings out other data of interest to those serving the older population. In one respect, this report breaks up the stereotype of the idle elderly. Nationwide in 1970, about one half (54.1 percent) of men between sixty-five and sixty-nine had some gainful work experience, and a healthy 24.5 percent of those over seventy had some kind of employment. 24.8 percent of women between sixty-five and sixty-nine and 9.3 percent of those over seventy remained in the work force. A slight drop from these levels occurred in 1974 when economic recession caused a lay-off of many workers, but the overall level remains remarkably high. There are two other considerations to be kept in mind. Some of the older workers were in relatively "retirement proof" occupations: those in the professions, doctors, nurses, lawyers, clergy; those who are self employed, farmers, shopkeepers, sales persons; and those in the service industries, recreation, entertainment, and personal services. Many older workers are in part-time, or seasonal work or restrict their work to comply with income limits set by Social Security regulations.

The Texas Department of Community Affairs reported last year a harsher aspect in the situation of older Texans. Almost 35 percent of those over sixty-five are living in poverty, as officially defined. In 1970, a single person living in an urban area whose income was not in excess of $1,750 was considered to be at poverty level; for those in rural areas, the amount was $1,500. For a two-person family living in a town or city, the income maximum was $2,200; and for the rural dwelling couple, $1,800. The income allowable today is somewhat higher, but still would not allow a person to budget for anything but basic needs. Even to earn this subsistence income, 14 percent of these elderly poor were still at work, finding some way to supplement another source, usually a Social Security pension. The colleges have made special efforts to bring persons from the elderly poor population into their programs.

Although the national level of education, or number of years of schooling has increased dramatically since 1920, many of the elderly's school experience preceded this period. In 1970, the Department of Community Affairs reports that of those Texans over fifty-five, 5 percent have had no school; 9.8 percent up to four years; 32.1 percent up to eight years; 23.8 percent some high school; and 13.9 percent high school graduation. Looking again at the national experience, one finds that those who were between fifty-five and sixty-four in 1952 had a median of 8.8 years in school, and that those in this same age group twenty-two years later in 1974 had achieved a median of 12.1 years in school. One sees the same advance for the population over sixty-five: in 1952, a median of 8.3; and in 1974, a median of 10.9 school years.

B. Community Colleges Independently Serving Older Texans

Three community colleges in Texas also have had active programs for older residents of their service areas, but have used funds either from local sources or from education grants out of state and federal funds. The three colleges are College of the Mainland, Texas City; Austin Community College, Austin; and Tyler Junior College, Tyler.

College of the Mainland's program was begun in July, 1973, and continues to serve a large number of Galveston County's older residents. In addition to offering an extensive program of courses specifically tailored for senior citizens, the college has developed a number of additional activities, including monthly activity days, a newsletter which reaches approximately 5,000 older residents, a counseling service provided in cooperation with the Family Service of Galveston, Inc., a joint effort with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Extension Service and county officials to provide a communication-improving forum for the aging, a bilingual resource or service directory for county residents, off-campus programs or satellite projects in area churches and nursing homes and other activities centered on the support of volunteer organizations in the county.

Austin Community College began its program in the fall of 1974 as a pilot effort to identify and meet educational needs of elderly citizens. Tuition-free courses were offered through the Community Services Division at different sites in the Austin area. The program depends for its success on support secured from other community agencies, such as public libraries, parks and recreation department, and other groups, public and private, serving the elderly.

During the present academic year, thirty-five classes were held at locations used by this program in Austin with approximately 400 adults over fifty-five years of age attending. In addition a small number of older adults attended regular classes offered by the Community Services Division of the college. One special program which drew considerable interest and attendance was a series on money management, indicating need for an ongoing preretirement preparation course.

Tyler Junior College's program began in January, 1975, with the college's Recreation Department presenting a varied program of craft and recreational activities of interest to older East Texans. Newspaper publicity and the interest of local chapters of NRTA/AARP proved helpful in putting this program on to a solid base. Other campus facilities including the library and a planetarium were made available to those enrolled in the program. By late spring of 1975, space for social activities was provided by the city's Parks and Recreation Department. Notable support came from participants who renovated an older building.

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